

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01355 181038Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /081 W
-----181043Z 059323 /21

P R 180955Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5674
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY GENEVA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1355

MAPUTO FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S PARTY

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ZA, UK, RH
SUBJ: UK-ZAMBIA RELATIONS: AFTERMATH OF OWEN LETTER

NEWS IN DEPTH ARTICLE APPEARING IN DAILY MAIL MAY 18 DIS-
CUSSES THE EFFECTS OF THE SMITH WARNING TO KAUNDA TRANSMITTED
THROUGH OWEN ON CHANCES FOR A PZACEFUL RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT.
THE FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL OBSERVATIONS MADE IN THE ARTICLE:
OWEN'S HANDLING OF THE WARNING IS A BLUNDER, SHARPLY REDUCING
CHANCES OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. IT IS CLEAR AMERICAN AND
BRITISH NEW INITIATIVE WAS UNDERTAKEN OUT OF FEAR THE WAR WAS
ESCALATING. CALLAGHAN "GRUDGINGLY" SENT HIS LETTER TO
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 01355 181038Z

KAUNDA CONDEMNING SMITH'S INTENTIONS BECAUSE OF PRESSURE
FROM THE AMERICANS "BETWEEN FRIDAY AND SUNDAY LAST WEEK."
OWEN PUBLICLY IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION
BUT CAPITULATES TO SMITH IN SECRET DEALINGS WITH HIM.
SOME PEOPLE SEE THE OWEN MESSAGE AS PART OF A CAMPAIGN TO
"BLACKMAIL ZAMBIA" AND AN ATTEMPT BY UK AND SMITH TO
"NORMALIZE RELATIONS AT EXPENSE OF ZAMBIA." BRITISH HAVE

ACTED BOTH MOST SUSPICIOUSLY AND FOOLISHLY OVER THE OWEN MESSAGE. THIS EPISODE RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER BRITISH ARE REALLY RELEVANT TO FUTURE TALKS FROM NOW ON IT WILL BE UNDERSTANDABLE IF ZAMBIANS AND PATRIOTIC FRONT VIEW BRITISH WITH SUSPICION AS AN INTERESTED PARTY "OSTENSIBLY ON THE SIDE OF SMITH." KAUNDA'S ANGER IS UNDERSTANDABLE-- IT IS BAD ENOUGH THAT THE WEST DOES NOT STOP THE FLOW OF OIL TO SMITH; IT IS WORSE THAT BRITISH GOVERNMENT GIVES ITS BLESSINGS TO SMITH BY PASSING HIS MESSAGE WITHOUT EVEN REBUKING HIM.

COMMENT: THE IN-DEPTH NEWS PIECE CITED ABOVE HAS THE EAR MARKS OF SOMETHING INSPIRED BY STATE HOUSE; MOST OF THESE INDEPTH PIECES USUALLY ARE. IT PROBABLY ACCURATELY REFLECTS KAUNDA'S STATE OF MIND IN THE FIRST TWO DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE OWEN MESSAGE AND BEFORE RECEIPT OF CALLAGHAN'S. WE AND OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES BELIEVE THAT KAUNDA'S ANNOYANCE OVER OWEN'S PERMITTING HIMSELF TO BE USED BY THE RHODESIANS AS A MESSENGER TO REQUEST DE-ESCALATION IS NOT PAST. KAUNDA'S RELEASING OF THE OWEN AND CALLAGHAN LETTERS IN HIS MONDAY ADDRESS TO THE NATION WAS A HEALTHY MOVE TOWARDS QUIETING DOWN THE FUROR OVER THE OWEN MESSAGE. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE OTHER ARTICLES, SIMILAR TO THE ONE IN THE MAIL, APPEARING IN THE FUTURE. THE ZAMBIANS ARE LIKELY TO SEE THE OWEN INCIDENT AS A USEFUL CLUB TO USE ON THE BRITISH FOR THEIR OWN ENDS.
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Message Attributes

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Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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